

May 10, 2012

Office of the Legislative Counsel
Joseph Howe Building
1690 Hollis Street
P O Box 1116
Halifax NS B3J 2X1
Email: legc.office@gov.ns.ca

Re: Bill 84 - Dalhousie University-Nova Scotia Agricultural College Merger Act

Dear Sirs/Madams,

Our names are Thomas and Natalie Cole and we both work at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro, NS. We have held positions at the NSAC for several years. Thomas as Plumber with Physical Plant and Natalie currently as Finance Officer for NSAC International, we are also members of the NSGEU.

We are writing today to express our concerns with regards to the absence of protection for employees in Bill 84, which was presented in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, May 8th.

We have read the letter the NSGEU has submitted to Hon. John MacDonell, Minister of Agriculture, concerning Bill 84 and we share the same concerns. As the Union stated in their letter sent to the Minister on May 9th, "*virtually without exception, every statute since 1996, which provided for devolution of a segment of the civil service to another employer covered by the Trade Union Act, has included the following three protections for employees:*

- *Provision that every employee designated for transfer from the civil service "is employed by [the new employer] on the same terms and conditions of employment of those under which the employee was employed [by the Province] until changed by collective agreement or contract of employment";*
- *Provision that "benefits accumulated by an employee while employed [by the Province] are vested in the employee and the employee is entitled to receive those benefits from the [new employer]"; and*
- *Provision that "the obligations and liabilities of [the Province] in respect of those employees are the obligations and liabilities of [the new employer] including all employee benefits and entitlements."*

Our understanding is that Bill 84 does not contain these same protections and it may leave the employees of NSAC at risk of losing the benefits they've struggled to attain. This really effects our household as we both work there.

The decision to merge with Dalhousie was not something that NSAC employees were consulted on, it is a decision that has been announced to us. Do not get us wrong, we fully support the decision that has been made. We think it is a great opportunity that will allow NSAC to grow and flourish in the future, and will also provide numerous benefits to Dalhousie, our best post secondary institution in Atlantic Canada. However, **the merger process and the devolution from Government should not happen at the expense of the employees.** We only ask that my coworkers and us not be negatively affected by this decision. We strongly urge you to honour the request made by the NSGEU to amend Bill 84 and provide the employees of NSAC with the protection they deserve.

Sincerely,

Natalie Cole & Thomas Cole

Finance Officer-NSAC International & Plumber-NSAC Physical Plant

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